

Brookmead School

High Street, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 9EX

Inspection dates 28–29 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher has brought about rapid change for the better. Staff share the senior leaders' vision for the school and, as a result, the school is continuing to improve.
- School leaders are ambitious for the school and for its pupils. They make sure that teaching is consistently good and that the range of subjects taught is relevant to pupils' needs and interests.
- Children in the early years achieve well due to good teaching and the happy and stimulating environment in which they learn.
- Pupils' results in national tests show that pupils consistently reach levels above the national average, representing good achievement from their starting points. By the time they leave the school they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Governors challenge and support leaders effectively. They know the school well, and check that actions taken are bringing improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The school caters for pupils' social, moral, spiritual, and cultural development effectively. As a result, pupils behave well, are keen to do their work and readily help each other. Pupils say they feel safe and are alert to the dangers posed by internet use.
- Teaching assistants are very skilled. They provide effective support for pupils of all abilities.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress is not yet rapid enough to secure outstanding achievement in all year groups.
- Not all middle leaders have yet fully developed the monitoring and evaluation skills required to drive up the quality of teaching in their area of responsibility.
- Teaching does not always ensure that pupils are challenged to do their very best.
- The quality of pupils' work is sometimes untidy, and their handwriting is not always legible.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 23 lessons or part lessons. Four of these observations took place jointly with the headteacher and an assistant headteacher. In addition, the inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils, school staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and four other members, as well as a representative from the local authority. Inspectors also held informal discussions with a number of parents.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work. They looked at a wide range of documentation including safeguarding documents, the school’s procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance and pupils’ work in their books.
- In planning and carrying out the inspection, inspectors took account of 133 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as three letters from parents. They also considered 26 questionnaires completed by teaching and support staff.

Inspection team

David Harris, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Lisa Rowe	Additional Inspector
Nigel Duncan	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Brookmead School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school has nine classes. Two classes are taught in mixed age-groups, Years 2 and 3 together and Years 4 and 5 together.
- Children in the early years attend full time.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average. In 2014 there were fewer than five disabled pupils or pupils with special educational needs in Year 2.
- The proportion of pupils provided with support funded by the pupil premium is lower than average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for looked after children. In 2014 there were fewer than five disadvantaged pupils in Year 2.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection there have been changes in leadership, with a new Chair of the Governing Body from September 2014.
- About half the teachers are new to the school since the last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that middle leaders develop their roles so that they all play a full part in improving teaching and learning in the areas for which they are responsible.
- Accelerate pupils' progress to secure outstanding achievement by making sure that:
 - class teachers consistently give work that is designed to challenge pupils according to their ability, ensuring that the work meets the needs of their varying skills and aptitudes
 - all pupils take care to always present their work neatly
 - pupils develop consistency in producing good handwriting, and that this is used across the full range of subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, her senior team and the governing body work closely together in promoting their shared vision for the school. They have been effective in remedying the weaknesses identified by the school's last inspection and uniting the staff in support of their drive for improvement.
- Leaders have led improvements to the quality of teaching. Joint observations with school leaders showed that their judgements are accurate and their feedback to teachers focuses on ways in which they can improve their methods. The school's self-evaluation shows that leaders have accurately identified the areas requiring development. Staff are overwhelmingly supportive of the drive for improvement.
- Careful tracking of pupils' progress ensures that support is quickly provided for any pupils at risk of falling behind. This also demonstrates the school's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and ensuring there is no discrimination.
- Pupils are very excited by the subjects they study at school. The varied and broad school curriculum is enhanced by many trips and visitors. It is further enriched by music, sport and outdoor learning and visits, for example, to Kew Gardens and Osmington Bay.
- There have been a number of changes in leadership roles. Some leaders, the headteacher, the early years leader and the mathematics leader, are well established in the school. Subject leaders and other middle leaders, some of whom have been appointed to their positions fairly recently, have considerable expertise in, and enthusiasm for, the areas for which they are responsible. They are not all, as yet, wholly effective in identifying ways that teaching can be improved to the very best levels.
- Opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are well provided. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate and value diversity and to respect others. For example, the school takes positive steps to widen pupils' understanding of different cultures and helps to prepare pupils very well for life in modern Britain.
- Relationships are extremely positive. There is a clear commitment to ensuring that everyone is treated equally and that there is no discrimination. All pupils, whatever their ability or background, are encouraged to take a full part in all the school's activities.
- Leaders make effective use of pupil premium funding to provide additional support where needed. As a result, disadvantaged pupils achieve well and make good progress.
- The school uses the primary sport funding effectively. It successfully raises the awareness of, and opportunities for, pupils to take part in a wide range of sporting activities. The school has increased the number of clubs available, and pupil participation is high. This helps promote healthy lifestyles for all.
- Safeguarding procedures and child protection arrangements are robust and meet the required standards.
- The local authority has provided good support for the school, helping with its self-evaluation and leading to improved teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide high levels of support and challenge which are proving effective in helping the school to continue to strengthen. Governors meet subject leaders and analyse reports from external advisers to understand the quality of teaching. They visit the school regularly to see how teaching is improving. They know what the school is doing to improve teaching and eradicate any weaker practice. Governors have established clear links between teachers' performance and pay decisions. They have a good knowledge about the school's performance information and how it compares to other schools locally and nationally. Systems for checking the school's budget are strong, including the monitoring of pupil premium spending. This enables governors to hold the school to account and decide whether it is making enough difference to pupils' achievement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have positive attitudes toward their learning and want to do well.
- Conduct in and around the school is good and pupils follow the school rules. When pupils come together, for instance in a singing assembly, they are polite, courteous and show that the school is a happy, harmonious community.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and teachers use these positive attitudes to help drive progress within their learning. On very rare occasions, where the teacher has not pitched the work at the right level for some

pupils, a few lose concentration and become chatty or fidgety, which gets in the way of their learning.

- Pupils are generally keen to do their best to answer questions. They try to complete their work properly, but do not always take enough care in the presentation of their work, and sometimes it is too untidy.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are happy in school and feel well looked after. This is a view supported by parents. One parent said, 'Children thrive at this school, it is striving to improve.'
- Most parents said that they are happy with the school's response to bullying, although a few indicated some concerns. They generally feel that the school's procedures and systems for dealing with complaints are thorough. Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms that bullying can take, including, for example, verbal, racist and cyber bullying. They say that incidents of bullying are rare and when minor incidents occur staff deal with them well.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of fire precautions, e-safety when using computers, and road safety. They have a clear love of school because they feel secure.
- Pupils enjoy going to school, which means rates of attendance are higher than is normally found. Parents are very satisfied that their children are both happy and safe at this school.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Training received from external consultants in reading and mathematics has improved teachers' skills. Visits to lessons during the inspection and work seen in pupils' books show that the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills has improved to good levels.
- Most pupils love their learning. In the words of one pupil, 'This school is brilliant for learning.' A high level of mutual respect and excellent relationships between adults and pupils create a positive climate for learning.
- Teachers work closely and effectively with skilled teaching assistants to make sure that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are fully included in, and benefit from, all classroom activities.
- Tidy classrooms and the use of high-quality resources support learning well, and pupils are encouraged to develop their independence by accessing these resources for themselves if needed.
- Teachers always tell the pupils what they are meant to learn, and show them how to achieve this. Pupils find the work interesting, but it is not always challenging enough for all of them.
- Pupils read confidently. They say that they enjoy reading, and comprehension groups at school have helped improve their confidence. Many read regularly at home, which also contributes to the good progress they make.
- Pupils learn well in mathematics because the teaching is good and activities are interesting. Pupils say they enjoy the opportunities to solve real-life problems. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, they had to apply a range of mathematical skills when calculating different recipe ingredients. Pupils successfully converted different weights and measures and were able to clearly explain the practical mathematics skills needed for cooking.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' achievement has improved and is now good. Pupils make good progress to reach standards that are above the average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Consequently, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Children make good progress in the early years provision and by the end of the Reception Year the percentage of children who have achieved a good level of development is above average. This prepares them well for their start in Year 1.
- The teaching of sounds that letters make (phonics) was observed during the inspection and found to be very effective. This has helped to ensure that pupils are confident in tackling new words when they read or write. Not surprisingly, Year 1 pupils reached better than expected levels in the national screening check for phonics.
- The attainment of the most able pupils was above the national average by the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics. Evidence from pupils, their work and the school's assessment information indicates that standards are continuing to rise. At Key Stage 2, the attainment of the most able pupils was above average for writing and average in reading and mathematics.

- The few pupils with special educational needs benefit from the good teaching and progress well. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants to make sure pupils benefit from all the activities provided for them, which are specially adapted when appropriate. Teaching assistants also ensure that pupils are fully involved in classroom activities, such as discussions.
- The performance of disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics in the 2014 national tests indicated that they were three terms behind other pupils in the school. The results also showed that they were less than two terms behind other pupils nationally. This shows the school's success in narrowing the gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and their peers. This is a significant improvement.
- The quality of pupils' handwriting is too variable. Some pupils' handwriting is well formed and consistent, and this helps them to get their ideas down on paper efficiently and clearly. However, this is not the case for many pupils. Although they produce good quality work for displays around the school, they do not use the same good quality handwriting when working in books across other subjects, or generally within their English books.

The early years provision

is good

- Children make good progress and achieve well in their Reception Year because of good teaching. They start in the early years provision with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age.
- Adults work well together as a team, planning activities that stimulate the children's curiosity and help children to learn well. For example, children excitedly chose from a range of activities when they returned from break and found an imaginary dragon travelling through their classroom. They were encouraged to write letters to the caretaker about it, looking for clues to help them solve the puzzles. The children work happily in groups, sharing resources and ideas, which helps them to develop their personal and social skills well.
- The early years leaders demonstrate a good understanding of how children learn and develop. The staff know the individual children well through thoroughly checking how well they are learning, and observing their activities. The children benefit from maintaining a good balance between activities led by the teacher and those they choose themselves.
- There are well established routines and effective procedures for ensuring that the transition from home or a child's pre-school setting is smooth. As a result, children settle in quickly, clearly enjoying the wide range of activities planned for them, and playing well together.
- Children behave well and learn how to keep themselves safe, moving around in an orderly and calm way. Staff work well with parents to reinforce the importance of home learning. Parents value the communication between home and school and say that their children enjoy attending.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	110518
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	453739

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	311
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ben Blunt
Headteacher	Katherine Douglas
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 February 2013
Telephone number	01296668543
Fax number	01296661004
Email address	office@brookmead.bucks.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2015

